Annual Report
Department of Urban Forestry & Evansville Tree Advisory Board
2012 Accomplishments & Future Goals

13 Years

TREE CITY USA
Arbor Day Foundation
Growth Award
9 YEARS

EVANSVILLE INDIANA
BICENTENNIAL 1812 - 2012

EVANSVILLE BICENTENNIAL
2012 TREES IN 2012
1812-2012
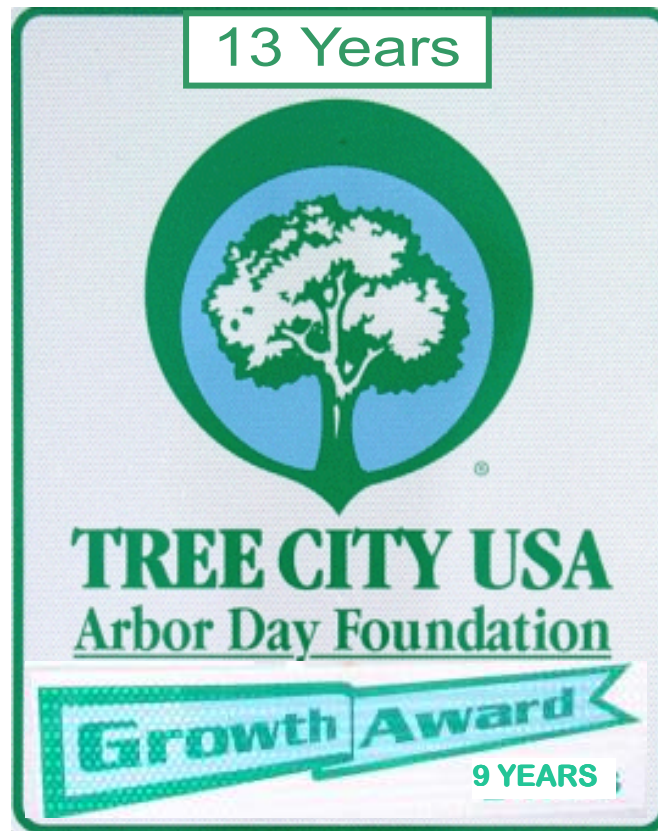
Introduction & History

The general goals of the Evansville Urban Forestry program are to improve the quality of life for Evansville residents by increasing the number of trees and improving tree health and longevity. This is done by better managing the city tree crew, through improved public tree care, Arborist (tree pruner's) Licensing, and public education.

Specifically, trees benefit Evansville by:

⚘ **Increasing property values –** Property values can be increased by as much as 27% (Tree City USA Bulletin #28), which can increase the city tax base.

⚘ **Lowering energy costs –** Trees can reduce utility bills through evapotranspiration and shading buildings in the summer, and reducing cold winds in the winter.

⚘ **Intercepting rain water and lower soil erosion –** Trees intercept rain water before reaching the ground. This greatly reduces the amount of storm water that reaches public storm water facilities, therefore lowering storm water facility costs.

⚘ **Reducing air and water pollution –** Trees clean our air and water through taking up particulates through natural gas and liquid exchanges, which provides a healthy environment for our citizens.

⚘ **Improving quality of life –** Trees are relaxing to people by providing aesthetic beauty, recreation and the overall feeling of psychological well being. This reduces mental fatigue and aggressions, therefore increasing social interactions and lowering crime rates. This can result in a better overall appeal of the city to it's residents and visitors.

No management plan can exist without knowledge of what resources exist. The Urban forestry office has an inventory of over 12,000 public and street trees. Using USDA software, we were able to take the inventory and find our annual benefits gained from trees of $692,906.89 resulting from energy reduction, CO2 reduction, air quality improvement, stormwater reduction and beautification benefits.

This valuation does not include trees in forested areas. Our department has estimated that over 3000 acres of forested areas exist within the city limits on both public and private property. Benefits gained from forested areas have few costs, since they do not have to be managed. A majority of the trees in Evansville are on private property, therefore the valuation that we gain from trees in Evansville is significantly greater than the estimates given above.

Without a board and department to manage the urban forestry programs, these benefits would diminish greatly. The Department of Urban Forestry and Tree Advisory board is currently maintaining an inventory of public and street trees, planting the right trees in the right places, proper pruning, protection/preservation of trees/greenspace where appropriate and education of the public concerning tree care.

Evansville Tree Advisory Board

Established in 2001, the board consists of seven voluntary members. The duties and of the board are as follows:

- Provide regular and special meetings for tree related issues.

- Facilitate the replanting of removed trees, and assist with the development and execution of tree-planting programs.

- Communicate and assist other city and government offices, not-for-profits groups and Evansville citizens concerning trees.

- Enforce the Evansville Tree Ordinance, issue permits and govern all aspects of the Evansville Tree Pruner's Licensing program.

- Recommend and approve to be removed any public tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or is injurious to utilities, public improvements or other trees.

Department of Urban forestry

The Evansville Department of Urban Forestry was established and began operations in 2001 under the Department of Transportation and Services. The department consists of four full time tree crew workers, and is managed by the Evansville City Arborist, whose duties are:

- Accomplishing the day to day activities of hazard tree and tree limb removal, and removing tree debris created by storms from improved public right of ways.

- Maintaining and updating the existing inventory of public and street trees.

- Supervising the Evansville Tree Pruner's Licensing program, and administering fines for non-compliance.

- Inspecting and making recommendations for public tree issues, as well as planning, performing and assisting with public tree plantings.

- Recertifying for annual Tree City USA status and planning and supervision of annual Arbor Day event.

- Educating the public regarding proper tree planting and care.

- Managing the Department's fiscal budget, recommending an annual budget and applying for grant funding.

Department of Urban Forestry - Monthly Report 2012

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
Trees Removed	1	10	11	5	2	2	8	5	19	11	25	25	124
Board Approved Removals*												2	2
Individual Trees Pruned	3	7	2	15	17	23	8	13	18	13	4	15	138
Street Trees Pruned (feet)					1650				2000	2600		100	6350
Boulevards Pruned (feet)									2000				2000
Alleys Pruned (per block)	2		2	2	10	3	15	14	5	2	1		54
Brush Cleared (feet)								6400	350	6500	3800		17050
Stumps Ground	10	5		3	9								27
Trees Tranplanted													0
Tree Planted			81										81
Other public plantings				232	583					50	188		1053
Board Approved Plantings*				18	18						18	18	72
Debris Pick Up	1		4	3	1	2	9	14	1			2	37
# Events generating debris			1	1	1	1	8	2	4	1	1	1	21
# Debris locations			1	1	1	1	8	2	4	1	1	1	21
Tree Pruners Fined					1								1
Public Seminars	1	1	2	7	4	3	2	3		2	2		27

* Plantings for removals approved by Tree Advisory Board on facilities managed by other government departments for trees on public property

Trees Removed = 126Trees Planted = 1206 Trees removed/planted ratio = 9.5714

2012 Accomplishments

- Assisted with development and collaborated with the River City Trees Committee to oversee the "2012 Trees in 2012" program to celebrate the city's bicentennial. Goal of planting 2012 trees in 2012 was exceeded by planting a total of 20,232 trees.

- Assisted the Department of Metropolitan Development with the selection, planting and watering 232 trees in the downtown area.

- Coordinated receiving, distributing, and assisting with planting of over 500 trees for mitigation of trees removed by the Levee Authority.

- Continued Arbor Day Ceremonies, and maintained the City's Tree City USA status for the 13th consecutive year. Received Growth Award for 10th consecutive year.

Other Accomplishments since beginning of Urban Forestry program in 2001

- Reduced tree topping in Evansville though public education and education of local tree companies.

- Conducted City's Tree Pruner's Licensing program and are currently providing the required Ordinance Compliance seminars for the program at <u>no additional cost</u> to local tree companies.

- Placed and maintained an inventory on public and street trees on a GIS web site.

- Developed and updated Arboricultural Specifications Manual and Landscape Guidelines. Proposed guidelines to be used in all tree planting for new public developments.

- Developed the Urban Forestry Management Plan, Emergency Tree Debris Removal Plan, and an Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan.

- Maintained a positive 2 for 1 tree planting ratio since the beginning of the program

    - Tree planting/removal ratio for 2011 = 600 planted / 209 removed = 2.87 trees planted for each tree removed in 2010.

    - Tree planting/removal ration for since 2001 = 2,148 planted / 889 removed = 2.41 trees planted for each tree removed since 2001.
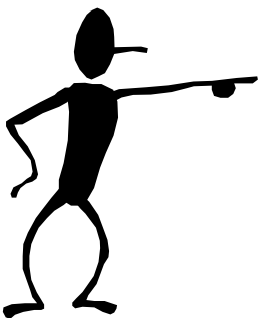
Goals for 2013

- Establish consistent standards for tree maintenance and planting on state properties in Evansville through adoption of a memorandum of understanding with Indiana Department of Transportation.

- Modify the Bicentennial "2012 Trees in 2012" so that a continuous count of planted trees in is developed so that the public is welcome to count their trees towards our total number of trees planted in Evansville.

- Developing a program to award a commercial development for outstanding tree planting efforts beyond the requirements of the parking lot landscaping code.

- Redevelop city tree nursery and restock nursery with trees to be planted for future public tree plantings.

- Investigate way to give seminar required for Evansville Tree Pruner's Licensing on-line.

Continuous Goals

- Maintaining our status as a Tree City USA community. The following requirements are needed to maintain the Tree City USA status:

  - Maintaining a minimum of $2 per capita for the purpose of management of trees.
  - Having an active tree board, department, and arborist to manage the program.
  - Enforcing an active ordinance to help protect existing public trees.
  - Hosting an annual Arbor Day Celebration.

- Creating new programs to maintain Tree City USA Growth Award status.

- Organizing and Conducting annual Arbor Day Celebrations.

- Planting, pruning, and removing trees where needed for public safety.

- Supporting and coordinating between vital government agencies and Not-for-profit groups concerning trees.

- Developing programs and activities for public education and involvement for tree planting and care in the community.

- Enforcement of the City's Tree Ordinance, commercial tree pruner's licensure, Arboricultural Specifications Manual and the Emergency Tree Debris Management Plan.

- Monitor for Emerald Ash Borer and initiate established plan when it is found in Evansville.

- Continue to replace trees in public areas as they die or outgrow their space.

In addition to these programs, we are always coming up with new programs, and are always open to comments and suggestions.

A Gnome's Tale: Birthday Trees for Evansville

Once upon a time, not too long ago, far away to the South, a City was having a birthday! Not just any birthday, but its 200th birthday – which is a big deal for a City!

Now in this fair City, there were green-hearted folks who called themselves the "GreenTeam" - friends and colleagues who loved nature and gardens, birds, bees, fish, flowers, trees and... well you get the idea. They decided they wanted to do something special for the City's bicentennial.

> "Hey! How about we plant 200 trees?" asked DS, the petite blonde.
>
> "Cool! Let's do it!" cried Shawn the TreeMan.
>
> "Why stop at 200? Why not 2012?" asked the Mayor.
>
> "Oh, my!" exclaimed DS, "We're going to need a bigger budget!"
>
> "Ask for a donation!" suggested Jim the CanMan.

And that, boys and girls, is how our 2012 Trees in 2012 project got its start!

April 25, 2012 – 2012 Trees in 2012 Kickoff Event. Alcoa volunteers (in blue shirts) Evansville Firefighters, Urban Forestry Staff, SWINPAWS & Master Gardener volunteers planted 25 trees at Fire Houses and enjoyed a picnic lunch afterward.

Alcoa donated funds to pay an artist to design our logo; buy buttons for publicity and create our Facebook page. Alcoa got our project off to a great start by giving away 600 native saplings (Tulip, Dogwood, Chestnut Oak and Cherrybark Oak) at Earth Day events held at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden and Wesselman Nature Center.

Vanderburgh County residents were invited to post photos of their tree to our Facebook page to be entered in a random drawing for a free tree.

The Facebook page also included lists of recommended trees, videos of proper planting techniques, information on tree care during the "Drought of 0-12" and interesting tree trivia.

Our big kick off event also included Alcoa volunteers who came to help us plant 25 trees at three Evansville Fire Department facilities. The firefighters showed their appreciation by hosting a picnic for the volunteers. It was a great time!

With City Arborist Shawn Dickerson and Alcoa volunteers looking on, an Evansville Firefighter demonstrates how to REALLY water a tree! (Don't' try this at home, folks!)

Another fun event was our May 19 Plant Conservation Day event at Mesker Park Zoo – along with pulling kudzu and posing for Sky Art in red T-shirts, we planted native trees donated by Comb's Landscape Nursery. We enjoyed pulled pork sandwiches after "pulling" kudzu.

May 19 at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden – Red Shirted "Plant Geeks" plant native trees donated by Comb's Landscape.

S'More Trees!

Our grand finale was also at Mesker Park Zoo on November 24 – Brownie, Daisy and Girl Scouts Troops #80, #65, and #458 helped us plant seven native bald cypress trees at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden. We jokingly referred to this project as "S'More Trees", in reference to that famous, fireside treat enjoyed by Scouts. In addition, the Girl Scouts decorated the newly planted bald cypress trees as well as other trees at the Zoo with birdseed ornaments, many of which they made themselves. Shawn Dickerson, City Arborist, and Paul Bouseman, Mesker Zoo's Botanic Curator, provided instructions on proper tree planting for the Scouts in hopes that they will plant trees at home and around their communities.

A portion of the trees were donated by Combs Landscaping and others were purchased through a Vanderburgh Soil and Water Conservation District Grant. The Evansville Audubon Society, Wild Birds Unlimited and Pedia Research donated ready-made birdseed ornaments & supplies for the Scouts to make the ornaments.

A few of our GreenTeam: River City Tree Committee :(L-R) Shawn Dickerson, City Arborist, Dona Bergman, SEEQ Director, Jay Scott, Comb's Landscape, Paul Bouseman, Mesker Zoo Botanic Curator, Davie Sue Wallace, SWINPAWS.

November 24: S'More Trees – with a little help, a Girl Scout decorates a tree at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden with bird seed ornaments. This was the 2012 Trees in 2012 finale.

Did we make our goal of 2012 trees? YES, WE DID! The final count was an amazing **20,232 trees** planted in Vanderburgh County in 2012! We don't plan to stop promoting or planting native trees – keep on the lookout for 2013 activities!

2013 Indiana Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Office of Pollution Prevention and Technical Assistance (OPPTA) is now accepting nominations for the 2013 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence. The Indiana Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards recognize exemplary projects across Indiana. Projects must demonstrate significant and measurable results, be innovative, comprehensive and documented. The awards are open to all Indiana facilities, state and local units of government, individuals, and technical assistance organizations that operate or support environmental protection efforts of outstanding quality. The deadline is **April 19, 2013**. To learn more, call 800.988.7901 or visit www.in.gov/idem/5147.htm.

Indiana Department of Environmental Management IDEM

2013 INDIANA GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE